

Remarks

This is in response to the Office Action mailed August 25, 2005 in the above-identified patent application. In that Office Action, claims 1-13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,782,841 to Lopez.

By this Amendment, applicants have amended independent claims 1, 8 and 12. Correction of an informality has been made to claim 3 and amendments correcting informalities and claim dependency have been made to claim 7. Claims 2, 6 and 13 have been canceled.

Claim 1 has been amended to recite, among other things, a one-piece connector and hub sub-unit including an integral first end, second end and central portion between the first and second ends. The first end terminates in a blunted piercing tip while the second end is adapted to receive a hollow needle terminating in a sharpened piercing tip. Lopez discloses a needle assembly that includes a hub portion 50 having a sharpened needle at one end and a sharpened piercing tip at the other end (see FIG. 2). As shown in FIG. 16, the needle assembly in Lopez can be provided by inserting the assembly into the distal end of a tube holder 14. Luer end 106, shown in Lopez, is then inserted into a "medical device" 98 which, as shown in FIG. 16 includes another sharpened needle tip.

Although the Office may consider luer end 106 as a blunted end, it is clearly not a blunted piercing end used for piercing, for example, the septum of a sample port. That

is evident from FIG. 16 which requires that luer end 106 be further connected to the “medical device” 98. For this reason, Applicants submit that Lopez does not anticipate or suggest a one-piece connector including a first end terminating in a blunted piercing tip.

Likewise, Lopez does not disclose nor suggest the one-piece connector of claim 8. Claim 8, as amended, recites a connector unit for attachment to the barrel of sample 2 receiver. The connector unit includes a first end, a second end and central portion between the first and second ends. The first end terminates in a blunted piercing tip, while the second end includes a hollow needle terminating in a sharpened piercing tip. A flow path extends between the first and second piercing tips. Again, Lopez does not disclose a one-piece connector with the features as recited. Lopez has an end that includes a hollow needle 102 (in FIG. 16), a luer end 106 which is inserted into a second needle (“medical device” 98). The fact that Lopez discloses inserting the Luer end 106 into a further device 98 is, in fact, more like the prior art shown in figures 1A, 1B and 1C of the present application. It is exactly this multi-step assembly that the present invention was intended to overcome.

Claim 12 has been amended to recite, among other things, a first end terminating in a blunted piercing tip and a second end terminating in a sharpened piercing tip. For the reasons set forth above, such device is neither shown nor suggested in Lopez.

Accompanying this Amendment is a petition for a three-month extension of time and a Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement. Consideration of the

Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement and reconsideration of the claims are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andrew G. Kolomayets", is written over a horizontal line.

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